Supreme Court, U.S.
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70-341

IN THE

SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

OCTOBER TERM, 1970

No. 1888

RONALD DALE TAGGART,
Petitioner,

vs.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
Respondent.

PETITION FOR WRIT OF CERTIORARI TO THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE NINTH CIRCUIT

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INDEX

1. Opinion of the Court Below 2
2. Statutory Provision Sustaining Jurisdiction 2
3. Questions Presented and How Raised 2
4. Statutes and Regulations Involved 3
5. Statement of the Case 3
6. Facts 3
7. Reasons for Granting Writ 7
8. Argument 7

I. Ehlert Should Be Reviewed. Ehlert Explicitly Turned on a Factual Assumption That Now Appears to Be Without Basis-in-Fact 7

A. There Is Overwhelming Judicial Opinion That the Factual Basis for This Court's Decision Is Unfounded and That the Language of Both the DoD 1300.6 and the AR 635-30 Is Uniformly Considered Plain, and That There Is No Ambiguity, and It Must Be Followed 8

II. The Army Can't Be Counted on to Follow the Guidelines of Its General Counsel 8

Conclusion 13

Appendix A—Opinion of the U. S. Court of Appeals (not yet reported) A1

Appendix B—Amendment and Regulation Involved A2

Appendix C—Affidavit of Counsel in Support of Petition for Rehearing A3

Table of Authorities

Ehlert v. *U. S.*, 91 S.Ct. 1319 (1971) 2, 7, 8, 11, 12

Estep v. *U. S.*, 327 U.S. 114 8

Mulloy v. *U. S.*, 398 U.S. 410 (1970) 2

Seeger v. *U. S.*, 85 S.Ct. 850 (1965) 11
Welsh v. *U. S.*, 90 S.Ct. 1792 (June 15, 1970) 11

CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS, STATUTES AND REGULATIONS

AR 635-20 ..... 8, 10, 12
32 C.F.R. § 1625.2 3
Constitution of the United States, Fifth Amendment 3
DoD 1300.6 8
28 U.S.C. § 1254 (1) 2
U.S.C. § 3231 2

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PETITION FOR WRIT OF CERTIORARI TO THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE NINTH CIRCUIT

TO THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES:

Petitioner prays that a writ of certiorari issue to review the judgment of the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit affirming the judgment of the United States District Court for the Central District of California, convicting the petitioner for a violation of the Universal Military Training and Service Act and sentencing him to the custody of the Attorney General.

1. OPINION OF THE COURT BELOW

The opinion of the United States Court of Appeals is not yet reported. It is set forth as Appendix A to this petition.

2. STATUTORY PROVISION SUSTAINING JURISDICTION

The judgment of the Court of Appeals was entered on April 27, 1971, the same date as the Opinion, Appendix A.

This Petition for Writ of Certiorari is filed within the required thirty days time, as extended by Mr. Justice Douglas to June 26, 1971.

The jurisdiction of the Court rests on Section 1254 (1) of the Judicial Code, 28 U.S.C. The District Court had jurisdiction under U.S.C. § 3231.

3. QUESTIONS PRESENTED AND HOW RAISED

The Motion for Judgment of Acquittal and some of the briefing in the Court of Appeals raised the following questions including the one of late crystallization of conscientious objector, considered by this Court in *Ehlert* v. *United States*, 91 S.Ct. 1319 (1971).

A. This petitioner questions the validity of the explicitly stated basis given by this Court for *Ehlert*. Petitioner presents herein a detailed affidavit of fact and over two dozen court opinions to show that the Court's stated basis has no basis in fact.

B. Whether *Mulloy* v. *United States*, 398 U.S. 410 (1970), requires a reopening of a registrant's classification postured as petitioner.

4. STATUTES AND REGULATIONS INVOLVED

Involved are the Fifth Amendment and 32 C.F.R. § 1625.2. They are set forth in Appendix B.

5. STATEMENT OF THE CASE

The indictment charged Taggart with a violation of the Universal Military Training and Service Act for refusing to submit to induction [CT. 2].

He pleaded "not guilty" and was tried by the Honorable Irving Hill, District Judge, sitting alone without a jury. He was found guilty and given an 18 month sentence, the first six in a jail and the next twelve on probation [CT. 18], and is on bail pending appeal [CT. 18].

A written Motion for Judgment of Acquittal had been filed during the trial [CT. 14].

6. FACTS

The facts are found complete in the Selective Service file of the petitioner.

Taggart registered with the Selective Service System on April 14, 1966 [Ex. 2]. A student, he was classified II-S by his Local Board on October 12, 1966 [Ex. 11]. On July 12, 1967, he was classified I-A by his Local Board [Ex. 11]. On February 15, 1968, Selective Service System Form 252, Order to Report for Induction on March 12, 1968, was mailed to him [Ex. 45]. On March 27, 1968, another Order to Report for Induction on April 3, 1968, was mailed to him [Ex. 46]. Other orders to report were sent [Ex. 11]. Mail addressed to his last known address was returned to the Selective Service System unclaimed [Ex. 68].

Taggart informed his Local Board why he had not reported for induction on the various dates [Ex. 71]. The reason was that he did not receive the notices.

On September 5, 1968, he requested Selective Service System Form 150, for Conscientious Objectors, from his Local Board [Ex. 79].

On October 31, 1968, it was recommended by the State Director that Appellant be reported as a delinquent [Ex. 84].

The Selective Service System made a Delinquent Registrant Report on Appellant on November 6, 1968 [Ex. 85].

On June 11, 1969, Mr. Ryan of the F.B.I. called the Local Board and asked that Taggart be ordered, per United States Attorney authority, to report for induction with the July induction call [Ex. 87]. He was so ordered [Ex. 88]. On June 26, 1970 he again requested Selective Service System Form 150 for Conscientious Objectors [Ex. 89].

Taggart submitted the Special Form for Conscientious Objectors to his Local Board and it was marked "received July 2, 1969" [Ex. 94]. In this form he presented a prima facie case for a I-O conscientious objector classification [Ex. 90-99].

Taggart was ordered to report for Induction on July 1, 1970 [Ex. 11]. He reported for induction but was rejected for one month [Ex. 10]. The United States Attorney was advised of the temporary rejection by the Selective Service System [Ex. 10].

Taggart was the subject of the following letter from the office of the United States Attorney to the Selective Service System on November 10, 1969:

Dear Colonel O'Brien:

A review of the above-registrant's selective service file reflects that he submitted a request for conscientious objector status which was received by the Local Board on July 2, 1969. The registrant had previously reported for induction on July 1, 1969 and was temporarily rejected for one month. He was subsequently ordered on August 19, 1969.

In view of the above circumstances, this office is deferring prosecution in favor of Local Board action. It is suggested that the Local Board review registrant's SSS Form 150. If the facts therein do not warrant a reopening of registrant's classification he should then be furnished form C-140-L and then Form C-190-A.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Very truly yours,

Wm. Matthew Byrne, Jr.
United States Attorney
/s/ Robert L. Brosio
Robert L. Brosio
Assistant U.S. Attorney

cc: FBI, L.A. [Ex. 110]

Despite the prima facie case established for the I-O conscientious objector classification [Ex. 90-99] and the evidence in support of his claim [Ex. 100-101, 110, 112], the Selective Service System refused to classify Taggart in any other classification but I-A. On December 8, 1969 the Selective Service System sent him the following form letter:

Dear Sir:

This will acknowledge receipt of your communication relative to your selective Service status. The information contained therein has been considered by

this board and you are hereby advised it did not specifically find there has been a change in status resulting from circumstances over which you had no control. In its opinion, the reopening or reclassification of your case is therefore not warranted.

Yours very truly,

By Direction of the Local Board
/s/ Margaret M. Carroll
Margaret M. Carroll
Exec. Secretary

[Ex. 113]

On January 5, 1970, he refused to submit to induction stating:

"I do not believe that a man should be forced to participate in or support in any way an institution in which he does not believe, in this case the armed forces. It would be against my conscience to enter into the armed forces" (Ex. 126A].

When Taggart refused induction he further stated to the Selective Service System officials in writing his reasons for refusing induction:

I, Ronald Dale Taggart, a conscientious objector because of my religious training and belief, am opposed to war in any form and will under no circumstances enter into an institution which supports any war. I am ruled by a higher law which tells me that to kill another human being is the absolute ultimate sin which a man can possibly commit. Because of my deepest religious beliefs and commitments it is impossible for me to be inducted into the armed forces. I know that in God's eyes I am doing the right thing and am aware of and willing to face the consequences of my decision.

Ronald Dale Taggart

[Ex. 127]

7. REASONS FOR GRANTING WRIT

The Court should consider anew its *Ehlert* decision because the explicitly given reason for the Court's conclusion is without sufficient factual basis, if any exists.

8. ARGUMENT

POINT ONE

Ehlert Should Be Reviewed. Ehlert Explicitly Turned on a Factual Assumption That Now Appears to Be Without Basis-in-Fact.

This Court said in *Ehlert*:

> "We are assured, however, by a letter included in the briefs in this case from the General Counsel of the Army to the Department of Justice, that present practice allows presentation of such claims and that there thus exists no possibility that last crystallizers will find themselves without a forum in which to press their claims. *Our conclusion in this case is based upon that assurance.*" 91 S.Ct. 1319, 1324-1325. (Italics supplied)

A. There is overwhelming judicial pronouncement of "facts", in context, that shows this "assurance" does not comport with reality, among other things that late crystallizers discover that the military will not lend its ears to them and that they truly are without a forum.

B. Additionally, counsel attaches to this petition his affidavit that relates his own experience in this area of military conduct. It shows that other and most serious aberrations are frequently present, so frequently that counsel has no hesitancy in presenting this affidavit against the hearsay "assurance" based on nameless, faceless informants. It, and a supplement are set forth in Appendix C to this petition.

A.

There Is Overwhelming Judicial Opinion That the Factual Basis for This Court's Decision Is Unfounded and That the Language of Both the DoD 1300.6 and the AR 635-30 Is Uniformly Considered Plain, and That There Is No Ambiguity, and It Must Be Followed.

All judicial experience supports this claim of petitioner. If the Court intends to overrule all the courts below on this point as it has already done in one area of *Ehlert* [with respect to those judges who support the uncontrollableness of conscience in relation to the "crystallization" doctrine] it is respectfully suggested that an explicit pronouncement would be helpful, as in *Estep* v. *United States,* 327 U.S. 114 where the concurring opinion of Mr. Justice Frankfurter cataloged such an explicit repudiation of all Court of Appeals judges, but one (f. 1, pp. 138-139).

POINT TWO

The Army Can't Be Counted on to Follow the Guidelines of Its General Counsel.

Army practice, in context, is often far different from even the printed regulations; also, relief thereafter encounters built-in, unnecessary dead-ends.

1. "Knowledgeable" Hearing Officers [a requirement of DoD 1300.6 and repeated in AR 635-20] are not always assigned to conduct the "03 Hearings." See Affidavit of Counsel attached hereto, made part hereof by reference and marked Appendix "C", first several pages.

2. Administrative relief opportunity after the 03 Hearing is almost a mockery. Court relief from arbitrary decision is unnecessarily hazardous because records turn out to be inadequate-to-poor.

a. "Reporting" must be done at the expense of the applicant, if and when permitted and tape recording is now prohibited. See Affidavit of Counsel attached hereto, made part hereof by reference and marked Appendix "C", next several pages.

b. Completely favorable reports of the "03 Hearing Officer" have been arbitrarily rejected by superior officers who never saw the applicant. See Affidavit of Counsel attached hereto, made part hereof by reference and marked Appendix "C", pages A7 and A8.

c. On the other hand relief opportunity from the Selective Service System denials is readily available, and is granted when indicated. See Affidavit of Counsel attached hereto, made part hereof by reference and marked Appendix "C", pages A9 and A10.

Assuming it is concluded that the above listed arguments are considered sufficiently supported by the affidavit and by the reported cases we believe it follows either that the military remedy relief route is devoid of fairness to inductees, or, in the alternative that a no-man's land appears to exist. Therefore a writ is now justified on the proposition that the civil court remedies should be left available to late-filing conscientious objectors.

We believe we have disposed of the *validity* of the "assurance" given by the Army's General Counsel in Point One and Point Two, above.

A.

We now present facts and argument to remove, what we respectfully assert, is a related misconception in the Court's opinion, one stated in the same paragraph as its explicit reliance on the Army General Counsel's "assurance." The opinion says:

> "As for the absence of any no man's land, the pertinent military regulations are somewhat incon-

sistent in their phrasing, perhaps because of the sharp division among the court of appeals."

First, we argue that to the military there is nothing inconsistent in the AR's phrasing.[1]

We read these subsections of the regulation, as the military have always read them as meaning:

1. Sub (a) says "consideration will be given. . ." [only] "when such objection develops subsequent to entry. . ."

2. Sub (b) says: A man who didn't timely present existing conscientious objector belief to his draft board is S.O.L., the army's oral characterization. We translate this S.O.L. expression to mean: Surely out of Luck.

Second, the synopses of the 30 court opinions, *supra,* involving over two score judges plus our own affidavit show the military practice and give added support to our "First" argument, immediately above, that no ambiguity exists.

B.

A parallel consideration of the last two versions of the afore-quoted portion of AR 635-20 shows that the Army does try to pay lip service to this Court's pronouncements.

Attention is invited to the AR 635-20 dated 31 July, 1970. It is headed:

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1. The AR's provisions we refer to are set forth in the opinion's footnote 10. Subparagraphs a and b of ¶3, we submit, are merely repetitious. We italicize to emphasize our reading.

"10. See Army Regulation No. 635-20, ¶3:

'a. *Consideration will be given* to requests for separation based on bona fide conscientious objection to participation in war, in any form, *when* such objection *develops subsequent* to entry into the military service.' "

PERSONNEL SEPARATIONS
CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION

Effective 15 August 1970

This revision is necessary to reflect the recent change from "religious beliefs" as the basis for requesting separation from the service for conscientious objection to "deeply held moral, ethical or religious beliefs."

This heading is obviously a prompt and good start toward implementation of *Welsh* v. *United States*, 90 S.Ct. 1792 (June 15, 1970) *but*, when we turn the first page for details under ¶ "4 . . . Procedure. . .

"(1) General Information. . ." [we come to]

"(2) *Religious Training or beliefs held.*

(*a*) A description of the nature of belief which is a basis of claim.

(*b*) Explain how, when and from whom or from what source the applicant received the training and acquired the belief which is the basis of claim."

We submit this demand for details [with the word "*religious*" in the heading for the sub-paragraphs] is coercive and misleading, and in substance gives the anxious applicant for separation the same Procrustean bed as did the pre-*Welsh* version of the AR, dated 27 May 1968.

Perhaps the military may change the AR to conform to *Ehlert* (even as the 1968 version did belatedly bow to *Seeger* v. *United States*, 85 S.Ct. 850 (1965)) by omitting (a) of (2) [which had read "Do you believe in a Supreme Being"] and substituting the current question "(2) (a) A description of the . . . ."

We submit that conjectures about the future are out of place.

We call the current AR 635-20 coercive and misleading because *Welsh removed* a showing of "religious" training and belief as a necessity for qualifying whereas the current AR certainly implies that the nature of the belief, and its source, better be religious, or else. . .

Until the Department of Defense directs that all the armed services change their regulations (by whatever names known) to comply with the "assurance" given the Court by the Army's General Counsel no one can advise a man in any of the armed services that his claim for a conscientious objector type will be honored if consultation reveals that anything exists to show he had such belief before enlistment or induction.

Annexed to this petition is a Supplemental Affidavit that recites the experience of counsel at a Marine Corps conscientious objector hearing on May 22, 1971. In it are recited a number of denials of due process, chiefly ones of impermissable status of and incorrect conduct by the Hearing Officer.

On June 16th, events in this marine's case took a not infrequent turn: evidently recognizing one or all of the irregularities he was given one day to accept an offer of an Undesirable Discharge.

We repeat *until* there is a DoD directive ordering all the armed services to follow the assurance of the Army's General Counsel this Court has no basis in fact for its conclusion in *Ehlert*.

Finally, we believe that no conscientious objector should be expected to go into the Army to get out. We have heard of no one, since the prescient and desperate Professor Billings,[2] who could allow himself to follow such a procedure.

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2. *Billings* v. *Truesdell*, 321 U.S. 542 (1944).

CONCLUSION

1. The Selective Service System affords a fairer remedy to selectees than the military and is a better equipped administrative agency for determining conscientious objections.

2. Also, until the military regulations are changed to conform to the recent expression of the army's General Counsel there has existed, and presently exists, a no-man's-land for late crystallizing selectees.

3. A writ should be granted, or perhaps the case should be remanded for consideration in the light of the decisions of the last fifteen months.

Respectfully,

J. B. TIETZ
Attorney for Petitioner

DATED: June 26, 1971

APPENDIX A

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
FOR THE NINTH CIRCUIT

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
Appellee,
vs.
RONALD DALE TAGGART,
Appellant.

No. 26887

APPEAL FROM THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

Before: KOELSCH, ELY and TRASK, Circuit Judges

PER CURIAM:

(Filed April 27, 1971)

Ronald Dale Taggart appeals from the judgment convicting him of refusing to submit to induction in the armed forces of the United States (50 U.S.C. App. 462).

Appellant's Selective Service file reveals that this is another case of a Selective Service registrant tardily claiming to be a conscientious objector. In fact, the file affirmatively shows that appellant's beliefs preexisted by several years the Local Board's order to report for induction.

Appellant recognizes that the pertinent Regulation, 32 C.F.R. 1625.2, which this court has applied in numerous cases [e.g. *United States* v. *Uhl*, 436 F.2d 733 (9th Cir. 1971)] provided the warrant for the Board's refusal to reopen his 1-A classification. His principal contention is that the Regulation violates Congressional policy declared in 50 U.S.C. App. 456(j) and hence that it is void. However, this court has only recently considered such a contention and sustained the Regulation.[1] *United States* v. *Lowell*, ... F.2d ..... (9th Cir. Jan. 20, 1971). We reaffirm that decision.

Judgment affirmed.

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1. It follows that appellant's point that the Local Board's refusal to reopen constituted a denial of due process lacks merit. *United States* v. *Uhl* (supra).

APPENDIX B

Amendment Involved

V

No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a Grand Jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the Militia, when in actual service in time of War or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offense to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any Criminal Case to be a witness against himself; nor be deprived of life, liberty or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.

Regulation Involved

Section 1625.2 of the Selective Service Regulations (32 C.F.R. § 1625.2 (E. O. 10292, 16 F. R. 9862, Sept. 28, 1961)) provides:

> *"When registrant's classification may be reopened and considered anew.*—The local board may reopen and consider anew the classification of a registrant (1) upon the written request of the registrant, the government appeal agent, any person who claims to be a dependent of the registrant, or any person who has on file a written request for the current deferment of the registrant in a case involving occupational deferment, if such request is accompanied by written information presenting facts not considered when the registrant was classified, which, if true, would justify a change in the registrant's classification; or (2) upon its own motion if such action is based upon facts not considered when the registrant was classified which, if true, would justify a change in the registrant's classification; *provided,* in either event, the classification of a registrant shall not be reopened after the local board has mailed to such registrant an Order to Report for Induction (SSS Form No. 252), unless the local board first specifically finds there has been a change in the registrant's status resulting from circumstances over which the registrant had no control."

APPENDIX C

AFFIDAVIT OF COUNSEL IN SUPPORT OF PETITION FOR REHEARING

STATE OF CALIFORNIA)
) ss.
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES)

J. B. Tietz, being first duly sworn, states:

1. I am counsel of record in this captioned case and was counsel for petitioners in all courts below, trial and appellate.

2. I started practicing law in Ohio, in 1926; and, at all times since 1944 have practiced in my present office at 257 South Spring Street, Los Angeles, California.

3. Since 1944, and for 25 of the last 27 years I have specialized in draft and related military problems, nearly all of these clients claiming conscientious objections to war and to military training.

4. During this 25 year period I have followed the procedures of the eleven armed services (the four regular, and the seven reserve and guard organizations) as carefully as possible, on matters concerning my clients.

5. In 1968 DoD 1300.6[1] was amended in two chief particulars: (1) to take away the initial decision on a man's conscientious objections from his immediate commanding officer and (2) to afford him the opportunity to have private counsel: ". . . The applicant will then be afforded an opportunity to appear in person (with counsel retained by him, if he desires) before an officer in the grade of 03, or higher, who is knowledgeable in policies and procedures

1. The Department of Defense Directive referred to in *Ehlert*.

relating to conscientious objector matters. The designated hearing officer will not be an officer in the applicant's chain of command."

Prior to this amendment, and from the beginning of the Vietnam armed involvement reports came to me from many military installations that DoD 1300.6 was being entirely disregarded, as follows: "An officer took me aside and said 'I'm giving you a friendly tip: the policy here is to grant no c.o. discharges. You are up against a stone wall.' I learned he was telling me the truth."

From 1968 to date my aid to in-service men has included appearing with them at such hearings, ones now universally termed "the 03 hearing."

6. Samples of my experiences are:

a. Most recently, on April 20, 1971, I appeared with and on behalf of Dr. Ralph Hannah at the Armory in Pasadena, California. The hearing officer was an infantry colonel[2] and the four other officers present were either infantry or other non-legal (Judge Advocate General) men, hereinafter referred to in this affidavit as JAG officers. Each was in uniform like the Hearing Officer.

The Hearing Officer was directly on the applicant's chain of command. He answered one of my questions, as follows: "No, this is the first such hearing I have attended."

I was forbidden to use my *tape recorder*[3] and was told, "No, you will not get a *copy of my report.*"[3]

b. On April 22, 1971, I was at Fort Ord, Fort Ord, California with and on behalf of PFC Martin Rush, a "Native American" that is an Indian from the historically peaceful Pima tribe.

2. Underscoring denotes a violation of the DoD.

3. Italicizing denotes a grave unfairness.

There I encountered three[4] young JAG officers all sitting as a panel and was told "No, *you cannot use the tape recorder.*"[3]

c. On December 2, 1970 I was at a lawyer's office in Pasadena, California with Lt. Max Bothwell.

The Hearing Officer was an infantry colonel; the man who had appointed him was a colonel in chemical warfare; both were in dress uniform, as was an infantry major. All were in applicant's organization and/or chain of command.

I was *forbidden to use my tape recorder* (it being explained "This would inhibit freedom of expression."); I was told "You *will not get a copy* of my report."

This was the most extraordinary one I have attended in that 95% of all the hearing officer said was in this vein: "You are a most intelligent young man; the army needs you; you can do much for the service if you stay in."

d. I have attended hearings (all since the 1968 amendment, of course) where situations comparable to the above were present such as one at Fort Lewis, Fort Lewis, Washington, where the hearing officer was an infantry major and forbade the use of a tape recorder, one at the Marine Aircraft Wing near Santa Ana, California where the Marine Corps major was a non-legal officer and in the chain of command but did permit recording.

e. Where the Hearing Officer is favorably impressed, and so declares in a detailed report (with corroborating support in the form of many unimpeachable letters) the applicant still can encounter an abrupt and arbitrary denial of relief by a superior officer, a man who never saw him. See cases cited in Point I, above.

4. Underscoring denotes a violation of the DoD.

> Where relief is thereafter obtained at the trial level [by a persistent soldier and one able to get a lawyer's aid] such cases are generally unreported. For example Bernie Reynolds had a most favorable Hearing Officer report, and a dozen letters from priests and nuns but had to file a petition, in San Francisco, to get his writ of habeas corpus. No. 51576 N.D. Cal.

7. Concerning the sabotage of the initial version of DoD 1300.6. Several clients, from different military installations informed me, during the period beginning in 1966 up to the middle of 1968: An officer said to me I'll give you a tip. You are in a blind alley. The policy here is to turn down all these c.o. applicants.

8. The Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors is an organization largely of Quakers, and one that has had the respect of all concerned: Pentagon, Selective Service System, historic peace churches, etc. It has had a vast quantity of experience in these conscientious objector matters for a generation. In its publication "Handbook, for Conscientious Objectors, Eighth Edition, Third Printing, December, 1966, on page 82 re DoD 1300.6:

> "Although many men were discharged on grounds of conscience during 1964 and 1965, since the spring of 1966 virtually all applications have been denied regardless of merit."

In its Ninth Edition, Second Printing, January, 1968 it saw no reason to alter the above statement and repeated it verbatim.

In its Eleventh Edition, September, 1970 it reported "About 70% of the applications for noncombatant status and about 20% of the application for CO discharge are approved. Some unsuccessful applicants are discharged on other grounds." On page 93.

Evidently, the 1968 Amendment to the DoD improved the situation. What brought about the amendment and what were its new provisions?

1. Whereas, in 1964 and 1965 "many" of applicants for an AR 635 20 discharge were successful Pass the Word reduced it to denials of "virtually all applications" in 1966 and 1967.

2. This sabotage, and the attendant outcry and pressure brought the 1968 DoD 1300.6 amendment. *Thereafter* (1) the applicant's commanding officer was not to be his hearing officer; (2) a knowledgeable officer, 03 (captain) or higher was to be the hearing officer and (3) the applicant could have private counsel at the 03 Hearing. These changes clearly meant that the Department of Defense wanted the applicant to have a fair hearing.

/s/ J. B. Tietz
J. B. Tietz,
Attorney for Petitioners

Sworn to before me and subscribed in my presence this 18th day of May, 1971.

/s/ William A. Leeds
(Seal) Notary Public in and for the County of Los Angeles, State of California

SUPPLEMENTAL AFFIDAVIT.

This supplemental affidavit is to further show that the current practice of the military is to proceed without legal advice and, in consequence, to ignore the many court decisions interpreting the DoD 1300.6 and its progeny, in this instance the controlling Marine Corps Order, termed M.C.O. 1306.16B.

On May 22, 1971 affiant represented Pfc Elmer Ray Kent at his 03 Hearing at the Marine Air Base, Yuma, Arizona.

The Hearing Officer was a non-legal man (an aviator); also, he was in the chain of command. The "non-legal but aviator fact" was established by the insignia I observed on his lapels and by the way he signed documents that are now part of Kent's conscientious objector application for separation; the "chain of command" fact was his statement to me during the hearing.

The Hearing Officer also stated to me he would "use the chaplain's report and recommendation and the psychiatrist's report and reasoning."

> [This is not permissible. In the case of U.S. ex rel. Greenwood v. Resor (4th Cir., No. 15,392, April 12, 1971), the Court pointed out that AR 135-25 para 7b, expressly directs that neither the chaplain nor the psychiatrist should make a recommendation for approval or disapproval of an application for CO discharge. Thus the Court could "give no weight to the recommendation of either officer and we disregard whatever weight they were given by the Review Board."]

Also, he stated he would use, as his standard for judgment, Selective Service Systems Dr. Tarr's standard of ""training with rigor." This standard is false; there is no justification in the Act or in *Welsh* for this. It was issued, by the Director [LBM 107 6/July '70 Tarr] right after he was upset by the *Welsh* decision of the Court, June 15, 1970.

We were originally told that this hearing would be at the El Toro Marine Corps Base, a large installation with a legal department. No explanation was given for the change, or why a legal officer wasn't present.

On May 27, 1971 I received a telephone call from Kent and he read me the rejection recommendation of the 03 Hearing Officer: it was based on the incongruity of a man claiming conscientious objection to war when the record showed he had been convicted of possessing marihuana. It incorrectly stated he had been selling it, incorrect in other respects and most important, this and all other items were not mentioned at the 03 Hearing and we didn't know they were being considered. Copy of the Hearing Officer's report is attached. Copy of Kent's letter to affiant is also attached. Attention is invited to Kent's statement that the Hearing Officer interviewed him *before* the Hearing, in absence of counsel, and in defiance of the regulation and fairness. We refer to ¶5 of Kent's letter to affiant:

> "(5) He brings up many things which were not even covered in the hearing which came from conversations we had had before. The whole copy seems to revolve around this rather than the actual hearing."

An affidavit from Kent will be procured, one rebutting the report, if and when further pleadings are in order.

On May 29, 1971 the text of the report and recommendation of disapproval came. It was based on "insincerity". If supported by "demeanor" or by recited, pertinent facts the report would be on solid ground.

There is no mention of demeanor by word or in inference and the facts were immaterial ones such as (1) a conviction on a marihuana charge [partly incorrect]; (2) paper work late, including his letters of reference and, most important *none* of these items were related to us at the hearing and when I questioned the Hearing Officer at the conclusion of it whether he believed the applicant had been frank the officer said "Yes".

I had started the proceeding with his permission, and on my statement "We have the burden and, with the Hearing Officer's approval I will proceed with our case", and, after I covered everything, the officer asked almost no questions.

At the close he said, "You have covered everything" and then went into some generalities.

/s/ J. B. Tietz
J. B. Tietz

STATE OF CALIFORNIA)
) ss.
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES)

Sworn to before me and subscribed in my presence by J. B. TIETZ, personally known to me on May 31, 1971.

/s/ Edward Raiden
(Seal) Notary Public in and for the County of Los Angeles, State of California.

A11

COPY TO KENT

1:JTi:hr
1330
25 May 71

SECOND ENDORSEMENT on Private Elmer R. KENT's ltr 1:JBM:jcp over 1330 dtd 19 May 71

From: Captain James B. MCKENNEY (SSN 425 78 69 65) MSN 09 54 43/1501, USMC

To: Commanding Officer, Marine Training Squadron 103

Subj: Conscientious Objector Status; request for

1. Returned.

2. It is recommended that Private KENT's application be disapproved.

3. On 23 May 1971, Marine Corps Air Station, Yuma, Arizona, a hearing was conducted with Private Elmer R. KENT and Mr. J. B. Tietz (Attorney at law) present. Private KENT was afforded the opportunity to support his application.

4. It is felt that Private KENT's application is insincere. His application comes at a time when he is awaiting trial by Special Court Martial for an eleven month unauthorized absence. He was arrested 1 October 1970 by civilian authorities for possession of marijuana, selling marijuana, and possession of dangerous drugs. He was tried and convicted on 23 December 1970, served a ninety day sentence and is on three years probation. He stated that he had planned to return and apply for a conscientious objector status but was arrested. Although he claims to have started on the paper work prior to arrest, all his letters of reference are dated after 20 November 1970. It is felt that

while in civilian custody, he decided to apply for this status as a means of evading court martial.

5. Private KENT professes to believe that everyone is God and all people should love each other. His belief was derived from a vision that he witnessed over a year ago on a rainy morning in El Toro. Also he stated that he can no longer perform any job in the military.

6. The Chaplain and Psychiatrist also believe that KENT's application is insincere and a means of getting out of military service.

7. It is further recommended that the Convening Authority proceed with the trial of Private KENT.

J. B. MCKENNEY

27 May 1971

Mr. Tietz,

Here's the copy. I want to go to court with this. I'm confident that I'll be able to pay you your fee. I'm already working on that now.

There are some things which bother me about this copy.

(1) He states that he feels my application is insincere. He said at the hearing that he felt I was sincere.

(2) He brings up my civil case stating that I was arrested for Pocess. Maraj., Sales of Maraj. and pocess dangerous drugs. There was no sales involved—that was an intent to sell charge—besides it was dropped and so was the pocess dangerous drugs. I feel he's slighting me here and building ground for prejudice against me.

(3) A remark about my claiming to have started my application prior to arrest. I have my receipts and things which you gave me at the time I first came to visit you.

(4) I was not tried and convicted on that civil charge. I was black mailed and coerced into a plea of guilty.

(5) He brings up many things which were not even covered in the hearing which came from conversations we had had before. The whole copy seems to revolve around this rather than the actual hearing.

(6) "His belief was derived from a vision that he witnessed over a year ago on a rainy morning in El Toro," I did not derive my belief from that. That was only a conformation or understanding. Sort of like the key that opened the door. Also I don't believe I said rainy morning because it was at night and I don't think it was raining. I believe I stated that it occured about the the same time of year as when Calif had that storm which caused rain for 13 days straight.

That's about all I can think of right now. When you reply can you give me some idea of the length of time—(like a tenative time table) for this proceeding. That will give me a frame work to work with in on financing this. I believe I can collect the money soon.

Thank You

/s/ Elmer R. Kent

P.S. They were supposed to have my hearing at El Torro. There was supposed to be a Colonel as the 0-3 and some other people were going to sit in. I learned this from Capt. Suciu my military defense counsel. He doesn't know why it was cancled. Perhaps a mistake was made. I'll check.